648 looks like a horse's neck. During the last years of the Ch'ing dynasty, after the fall of Ta-ku Tui and Hsiao-ku Tui, the government built up Shan-leng Kang and Ma-ching-tzu as military outposts, with a city wall encircling the horse-neck ridge. Now all has been destroyed except a couple of feet of the walls. At that time the government made an agreement with the Lolo to use the Hsi-su Ho as a boundary line. In the Chinese territory east of the river a large number of government soldiers was stationed. Not only could Shan-leng Kang and Ma-ching-tzu help each other like the two horns of a sheep, but also a t'u-szu office was established in Ch'ien-wan-kuan in the south. Whenever the village of Heh-chio on the east bank of the Hsi-su Ho was invaded by the Lolo, the government would usually dispatch troops from Wu-pao Shan to help. The Chinese folk song of this area says:

Nature built Ma-ching-tzu;
Iron made Shan-leng Kang:
When woe befalls Heh-chio,
Wu-pao Shan helps it out.

We can see that during that time Chinese military strength was still strong enough to hold the territory along the eastern bank of the river.

487 Although Ma-ching-tzu overlooks Huang-mao Kang in the
361 west, there is still a distance of two days' travel on foot. From here down the slope, the road passes the territory of the black Lolo of the Pu-chi branch, where three or five small villages dot the mountain valley. Then after crossing the mountains several times for about 60 li, it reaches Ting-chia P'ing, a village inhabited heterogeneously by black and white Lolo. Further west in the Ch'ang-ho Pien area, the traveler frequently has to cross small ditches and shallow streams, which are branches of the upper Hsi-su Ho. Cho-chiao-na-ta is a village with houses dispersed on both sides of the stream. The houses are supported on wooden pillars and have thatched roofs. The life of the people there is very hard. Ma-ch'ia-ha-lo has only three to five households. From here eastward to Ting-chia P'ing is about [12] 70 li.

● 136 West of Ma-ch'ia-ha-lo are cliffs and precipices, wilds and forests. The air in the forest is dark and dismal, the sun scarcely peeping through. On the ground there are many leeches, which bite and suck human blood. When we passed this way, we saw snakes and scorpions frequently. According

136 to the headman-protector, there were also plenty of tigers and leopards. The author and his company slept one night in an old forest, called Ying-li-lo-ku. Even though we had a campfire during the night, we still felt the bitter cold.

133 In Mao-hsi-chü-lieh area there are some old, deep forests. After passing through them one climbs up to the top of [491] Huang-mao Kang, where the pathway suddenly becomes wide and level, broad enough for an automobile. The top of the mountain is about 3,500 meters above sea level. No trees grow there, but only small grasses which rise and fall with the autumn wind. So the place is called Huang-mao Kang [Yellow Grass Ridge]. West of the ridge, the mountains and streams are bright and beautiful, the farms and fields fresh and green. If one looks toward the far horizon, there is no dividing line between heaven and earth. The whole scene is like the "peach-blossom village," completely secluded from the outside world. Looking back to the east, one sees a different world with mountain precipice and deep chasms in disorderly rows, and old trees and deep grasses, all dark and gloomy.

Westward below the ridge, there are the villages of 361 Ch'iao-tzu-cho-lo on the left slope and Hsiao-lo-na-ta on the 621 right slope, the two just opposite each other. They both belong to the black Lolo of the Wu-ch'i branch. The villages in Ta-liang Shan are also widely dispersed, the houses being [342] about several tens of feet apart. Each house has a mud wall and a wooden ceiling, and is well built. Hsiao-lo-na-ta is about 100 li east of Ma-ch'ia-ha-lo; there is not a single household between these two villages. From here westward about 10 li is Erh-hou village, which also belongs to the Wu-ch'i branch. The whole village is built on a plain from the top of the slope downward to the bank of the stream. In the village [342] stands a modern-style house with white walls, a tiled roof, and a wooden door in front, painted in red and also carved. It looks like a palace [illegible] wild mountains.

Crossing the [illegible] and walking along the river bank for about 50 li, one reaches Chih-hu-chê-ko village in the territory of the A-ch[illegible] branch. Inside the village there is a natural pool encircled by big upright white poplar trees. It looks very beautiful and quiet. On the right side of the village is a small ridge, on which one can look down northward at the San-ho-i-chê stream that comes from Erh-hou village. This stream runs into the San-ho-i-mu river, which the Chinese call the I-ch'ê Ho. It forms a three-pronged river junction, like the mouth of the three rivers in I-ping, but here the water is very

farmer's house on one occasion, and he was taking the skins off a number of lambs. I stopped and watched the process, wondering why the farmer was doing so. In reply to my question he told me that in the night a wolf had got into the fold, and had bitten a large number of sheep and lambs. I asked him whether he had not heard the noise of the killing, as the fold formed a part of the house in which he lived. "No," said the man, "these stupid sheep will let the wolf kill as many as he wishes, and never cry out. Now, if they had been goats, they would have made noise enough to wake us all up, and we should have given the wolf more than he expected." It depends on the point of view, as to how you pass verdict on sheep and goats.

During the first night at Mr Long's the wolves outside of the walls howled fearfully. The long howl of the brutes makes one feel very creepy. If three or four of these animals are separated, and start calling to each other, the noise is a most uncanny one. The wolf puts his head low down, close to the ground, and begins to howl on a very low note. Gradually raising his head, till his nose points up to the sky, the howl goes up to a higher and still higher note, when it dies away like the song of an angry gust of wind on a wild March night. The dogs inside the walls replied to the howl of the roaming hungry wolves by continuous angry barks, and seemed as if they were longing to try conclusions with the midnight raiders. Not long before, a wolf had managed to get right into the compound. It did this more than once, and then it was determined to catch him. A small pig was tied up in a basket, just under the room in which I afterwards slept. Men were stationed all about in hiding, ready to rush out as soon as the wolf should appear. Dust was

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scattered near the several breaches in the wall, by which the wolf might escape, and a man was told off at each of these breaches to guard. If the wolf escaped it would be known by the footprints in the dust at which breach he had got out, and the man responsible for letting the marauder escape was to have a good beating the next morning. Attracted by the cries of the uncomfortable pig, the wolf came over into the garden outside of the guests' room and tried to get at the pig. Then the fun commenced. Men with torches rushed in, shut the garden gates, and chased the wolf all over the place. After much sport and hilarious laughter, a spear-thrust ended the midnight raids of the pork-loving wolf.

On Sunday morning we went out and sat on the hill-side, gazing intently at the mountains of Nosuland, and wondering what we should find there, if we succeeded in getting over the Yangtse ferry. The hills on that side were very like the hills on which we were resting, and yet the fact that no European had ever been among them invested them with a romantic interest, such as the hills we were well acquainted with did not possess. The unknown was calling us, and we longed to jump across the great valley and land straight away among the brave men who had held their own so long against all efforts to dislodge them.

On Monday we made a few final preparations, and on Tuesday started down the long hill, to try our luck at the ferry. The evening before we started a tall Nosu lady, who had relatives across the river, came to see us, and warned us to beware of treachery. The lady said that the hillmen were very fickle, and even if we succeeded in getting among them they might at any time turn right against us, and hold us to heavy ransom or sell us into slavery. On hearing this

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487 When crossing the stream on one occasion one of the men fell into the water and got a thorough soaking. As soon as we reached the other side we made a huge fire of brushwood, so that the wet man could dry his clothes before we proceeded on our journey.

245 Travelling along, we passed a number of olive-trees with fruit in rich profusion. Many of the Chinese are very fond of this fruit. It is sour when first tasted, but the flavour soon turns to a very agreeable sweetness.

563 After we had passed through the valley, where the stream with the silvery waters dashed and roared in its anxiety to reach the Yangtse, we came to an open clearing where a Chinese was growing a lot of fine sugar-cane. This farmer is a tenant of one of the Nosu landlords, and has managed to make himself liked by most of the hillmen. The red sugar-canes which he cultivates find a ready market, and are much more prized than the green canes which are usually seen in the West China sugar plantations. The young sprouts at the tops of the canes are used to feed cattle, and oxen and buffaloes are very fond of them. The large buffaloes which draw up the brine from the famous wells in Tzi Liu Ching, the most famous salt centre in the whole of China, are largely fed on these sugar-tops. The liking for these is not confined to
136 domestic animals only. One day some wild boars got into
224 Mr Yang's plantation, which we had just reached. The boars began ravenously to eat up the cane, and the owner and his men went out to see what the truoble was. The first animal they clearly saw they took for an ox. Yang worked his way through the canes, intending to coax the animal up to his house to await the inquiry of the owner. But on getting near the creature he saw it was an enormous old wild boar.

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He shot it, and between them they gave it the *coup de grâce.* It turned out to be the largest boar they had ever seen in those parts, and weighed several hundred pounds. It was a regular old warrior. Where it had scratched its back against some fir-trees they compared and found it was as high as a man's shoulders.

We were very interested in the sugar-cane grown by Mr Yang, but we soon found something to interest us still more. It was he who told us the startling piece of news mentioned in Chapter I. From him we learned that messengers had already been sent across the river to arrange with the tribesmen for the murder of the Englishman and his chief companion. He told us further that the place where the attack might be made on our party was a little farther on in the valley where he was living, and that the Nosu chief who had been chosen to commit the deed had already come down to the valley. This startling news made us feel uncomfortable, and we wondered for a while what we should do. After all, we thought the story might not be true, and that it might only be an attempt on the part of the Chinaman to frighten us back from our endeavour to lift the veil from the unknown. Had we turned back and appeared at that famous ferry on that same day, how Mr Tien would have laughed and ridiculed us! We were not going to give him that satisfaction if we could possibly help it. We determined to push on and risk it. We had won in one game and we might win in th next.

The farther we went the more the valley opened out, and at last we came to a stretch where were a lot of ricefields. The rice had been gathered in but the stalks were still standing. Only the ears had been cut off. In China every stalk

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431 generosity of the heart and to make it more probable that a request will be granted. A gift of wine usually means that there is a request for some favour to follow. When an overlord wants to put an extra impost on his tenants or retainers he follows the same course as the wizard. He calls them all together, gives them a good drink of wine, often even getting them quite muddled, and then he unfolds his plans. These are frequently agreed to on the spot and carried out in soberer moments when there is not the same enthusiasm for the overlord's interests. I think the wizard got a favourable reply to his request for help in connection with the coming marriage. As a rule the overlords find it pays them to treat their own people fairly well in such matters as this.

136 Around the farmstead were a number of wax-trees, and on these were resting a colony of magpies. They fled before our approach, and as they settled in a field near by I counted over fifty. There is a story that in the old days the magpies were all white and lost part of their whiteness as a reward for being the bearers of evil tidings. These birds are very tame and, like their relatives the ravens, are arrant thieves.

000 News was brought to us after the wizard left that there was a plot brewing among some of the clans who were not friendly to the people we were visiting to capture Mr Long and myself as we should return towards the Yangtse later on. This was the first news of a well-concocted scheme, at the bottom of which was Mr Tien and the Chinese at the ferry market town. They were going to play another game with us and hoped that we should be the disastrous losers this time. Two strong unfriendly tribes have their lands bordering on

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CHAPTER XVIII

ON THE MARCH AGAIN

ON the morning when we left See-tieh we were up soon after six o'clock. It had snowed a good bit during the night. Some of the snow had come through the boards of the roof and fallen on to my bed. I had covered myself with all that I had, and had crept right down under all, but I found it very cold in spite of these precautions. We found that the snow on the ground was not so deep as we had feared it would have been, and we were not prevented from proceeding on our journey still farther into Nosuland.

In preparation for our journey, the friends at the farmstead had cooked a lot of maize cakes for us to take on the road. We were very glad indeed to have these provisions, for that day we had to walk twenty miles in the snow, and there was no chance of a meal till late.

As we were travelling along and I remarked that I was getting hungry Mr Long told me that I ought to imitate the bears and lick my paws. Black bears are very common in Nosuland, and in the winter, when they hibernate in the caves, the people say that they keep off the hunger of the long months by licking their paws. For this reason the Chinese associate great virtue with these paws, and pay high prices for them. They are used as a special dish in their high-class feasts.

Soon after we got away from See-tieh we passed a small village, where lived one of Ah-pooh's grandsons. In the front of his house, out in the open field, was a sight which in Chinese

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fire were very cold indeed. We who were near the burning logs only just kept warm. 374

The next morning our host brought out a young black bear with a very fine fur, and this he wished to present to me. He said it would make a fine plaything for my boys who were in Chaotung. I was told that some of the bears on the hills around there were as much as four hundred pounds in weight. I have talked to men who have had encounters with these bears. Bruin does a lot of damage to the maize crops, and has the usual weakness for honey. Many a time he will knock over a hive in order to get at the sweet stores. Apparently all the efforts of the bees to sting them are futile, for the bear goes on with his meal, regardless of all the angry little winged creatures can do. One man told me of an encounter between a tiger and a bear which was witnessed. The tiger stalked the bear and then sprang at him. The bear, however, was ready, and caught "stripes" with his paws. Then he made a supreme effort and threw the tiger down the hill with great force. The latter was so surprised at this unusual reception that he gave it up and ran away. When the hunters are pursued by a bear, which often happens, they run up-hill and soon gain on the animal, who finds it very difficult to ascend rapidly. Some of the animals caught are very fat. In one house where I have stayed two or three times, the vegetables cooked for the guests are usually fried in bear's fat. I did not notice any difference, and imagined I was eating the usual pork fat. I was told that when the female bear is pregnant she is very mild and will not attack anybody, but as soon as she has her young ones she is very fierce and will attack anybody and anything.

136 [241] [262]

I told my host that I did not wish to take the bear, as I

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136 was afraid there might be trouble with it, especially when it got into the neighbourhood of two or three lively English boys. He then said he would catch and bring across to my home a couple of golden pheasants, which were then very 000 plentiful on the West China hills. The insane foreign demand for the skins of these pheasants had not yet reached this district, and those beautiful birds, one of the loveliest denizens of the hills, were left in peace. In the last two years a ruthless warfare has been waged, and in some places the male birds have been exterminated. No wonder the Chinese and aboriginals do not understand why these skins are in such demand, and it is not a pleasant task to satisfy the curiosity of those who wonder. That our women, who are supposed to be the gentler sex, can be parties to the cruel, exterminating slaughter of some of the most beautiful birds in nature, has never yet dawned on the minds of these people. I wish that in some way these birds could know enough of science to secrete some deadly juice in their feathers, which would cause violent headaches to all who wear them, and then there would be some chance of the birds being allowed to continue to live their lives in peace and beauty. It is a disgrace to Western civilisation and a blot on the female sex that so much beauty must be destroyed ruthlessly, that the women may follow the dictates of an insane, cruel, heartless fashion. It annoys one every time one sees a load of these skins going along in the direction of rail head, where they will be shipped to the continent I hail from, and your annoyance is not lessened when some friend, whose respect you prize, comes along and wants to know why there is such a demand for these skins in your country. I sincerely hope that a better day is dawning for the beautiful birds of West

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or cheese. This, we think, is a great pity as there is plenty of unoccupied land, such as it is, which they can use as pasturage for their cattle. The children drive the cattle and sheep out to pasture on the hill-sides early in the morning, and stay to mind them till the time for the morning meal, when they drive them home again. During the middle of the day the cattle are penned up in the hovel, and let out to pasture during the afternoon, and driven home again as it is getting dark. There is plenty of fuel about, and the tenants can go to the wood and bring home as much as they like. Moreover, there are no game laws.

There are wild beasts about, wolves, foxes, leopards, wild boars, and even tigers; and people, especially children, are not infrequently devoured by them. Some of the Miao are great hunters. They use spears, crossbows, and poisoned arrows. I think the poison they use is aconite. When they wound a leopard or tiger with their poisoned arrows, they allow the animal to get away, and later go after it. They generally find it dead or dying.

We have already mentioned Miao superstitions and legends, and here we shall only relate what we know of No-su religious beliefs and legends. These are the more difficult to learn